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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU



MOVING
TARGETS!

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. Since then, I have learned that my father is Dr. Fu Manchu, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my name.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!®

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

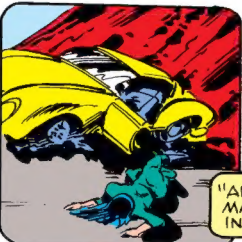
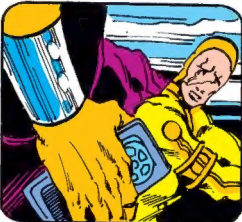
DOUG MOENCH / MIKE ZECK / AL GORDON / J. ROSEN, letters / ROGER STERN / JIM SHOOTER
WRITER PENCILER GUEST INKER B. SHAREN, colors EDITOR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

TREAD

"I HAVE FACED A NEW FOE, A MASTER OF STRANGE WEAPONS, WHILE MY ONLY WEAPON WAS EVEN MORE STRANGE: THE VOICE STOLEN FROM A MONSTER..."



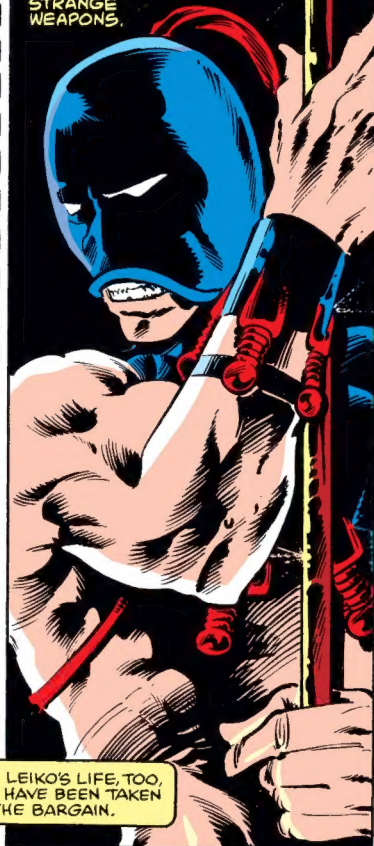
THE NIGHT



"AND LEIKO'S LIFE, TOO, MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN THE BARGAIN."

SOFTLY

"...THE RECORD OF SHOCKWAVE'S INCRIMINATING WORDS...THE TINY REEL OF TAPE WHICH MIGHT HAVE ENDED THIS MADNESS. BUT NOW IT IS GONE, STOLEN BY ZARAN, MASTER OF STRANGE WEAPONS."



"SCOTLAND: DAWN REACHES FOR MIDDAY. I HAVE WALKED FAR FROM THE FLAMES OF A CRASH, BUT FOR THE MOMENT LEIKO STILL LIVES...ALTHOUGH THE ONE NAMED ZARAN STRAINED HIS LIMITS TO ENSURE OTHERWISE.

"ZARAN.

"ALL FOR A SMALL REEL OF TAPE... FOR THE OVERLAID WORDS OF MONSTERS.



"FOR THE ENDLESS GAME... OF DECEIT AND DEATH.



WE'RE NOT OPEN YET, SO--EH? GOOD LORD!

SHE NEEDS A DOCTOR.



I'LL RING ANGUS MOPHIE STRAIGHTAWAY-- JUST SET HER DOON, LAD.

BUT WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED?

A MOTOR ACCIDENT. HAVE YOU HEARD OF... ZARAN?



ZARAN? OCH, AYE, I KNOW ZARAN -- LIVES IN LONDON, WORKS FOR THE MINISTRY IN SOME MUCKEDY HIGH AN' MIGHTY FASHION OR ANOTHER. FANCIES HISSSELF A *SPORTSMAN*...



...BUT HE'S NAE MORE'N A WEEKEND SPOILER IF YE'RE ASKIN' ME. KEEPS A LODGE OUT IN THE WOODS, ON THE *LOCH*.

I TOLD ANGUS SHE COULDN'A BE MOVED. HE'LL BE HERE IN A BIT-- HIS OFFICE IS JUST DOON THE ROAD.



"LOCH"?

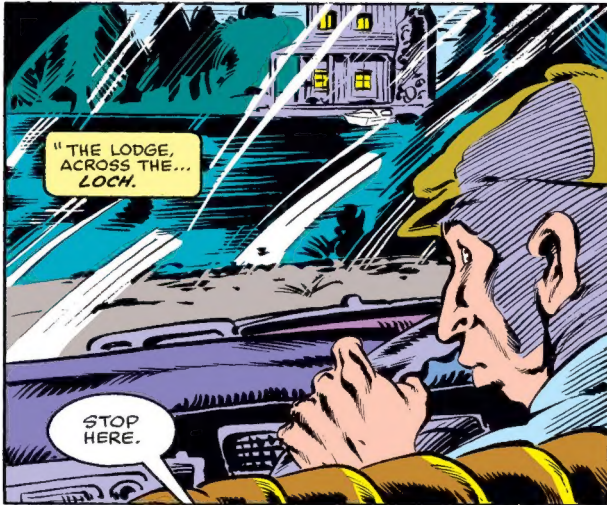
AYE-- THE *LAKE* TO YOU. ABOUT FIVE KILOMETERS NORTH. HE COMES HERE TO TOWN FOR HIS GOODS, AS WELL AS A LAGER OR THREE.

CAN I HIRE A CAR TO TAKE ME THERE?



Y'CAN MOST LIKELY HIRE ANYTHING AND ANYONE IN *THIS* WORLD -- IF YE'VE GOT THE MONEY.

LEIKO HAS MONEY.



"THE LODGE,
ACROSS THE...
LOCH.

STOP
HERE.



HERE NOW,
A NICE TIP
FOR A CHANGE--
TA, LAD.

"LEIKO...HAD MONEY.

"SHE ALSO HAD BRIGHT, CLEAR EYES,
AND A SPIRIT BURSTING WITH LIFE...
BEFORE ZARAN.



"I HAVE HAD
NO SLEEP IN
TWO DAYS.

"BUT THIS TIME
I WILL MEET ZARAN
ON HIS TERMS...

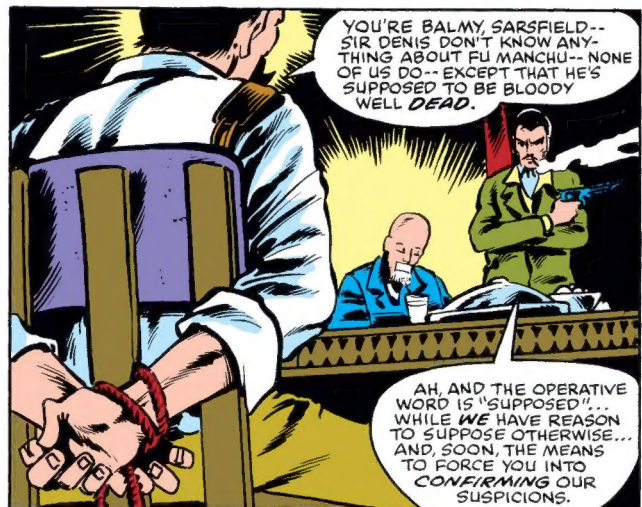
"...TERMS WHICH DICTATE SILENCE, DARKNESS, A CLEAR MIND,
AND A FRESH BODY.



"I WILL NOT SLEEP, BUT I WILL WAIT
UNTIL NIGHTFALL, AND I WILL REST...
UNTIL I AM READY FOR THE MEETING.



NICE LITTLE CASTLE NAYLAND'S
GOT HERE, FAR BETTER THAN MY
FLAT IN LONDON-- BUT THEN I'M
ONLY PAID TO DO THE DIRTY WORK.
NO GLAMOUR-BOY, ME, INVOLVED
IN THE LATEST EXPLOITS OF THE
INSIDIOUS FU MANCHU, EH
MR. TARR?



YOU'RE BALMY, SANSFIELD--
SIR DENIS DON'T KNOW ANY-
THING ABOUT FU MANCHU-- NONE
OF US DO-- EXCEPT THAT HE'S
SUPPOSED TO BE BLOODY
WELL DEAD.

AH, AND THE OPERATIVE
WORD IS "SUPPOSED"...
WHILE WE HAVE REASON
TO SUPPOSE OTHERWISE...
AND, SOON, THE MEANS
TO FORCE YOU INTO
CONFIRMING OUR
SUSPICIONS.



ACTUALLY, BY "KILLING" MY TWO COMPANIONS HERE YOU HAVE ONLY DELAYED THE INEVITABLE... A PITY, I ADMIT, SINCE YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I ADMIRE CLEVER GADGETS--



--BUT I'VE ALREADY RUNG MI-6 FOR MORE AGENTS, FLESH AND BLOOD CHAPS THIS TIME...

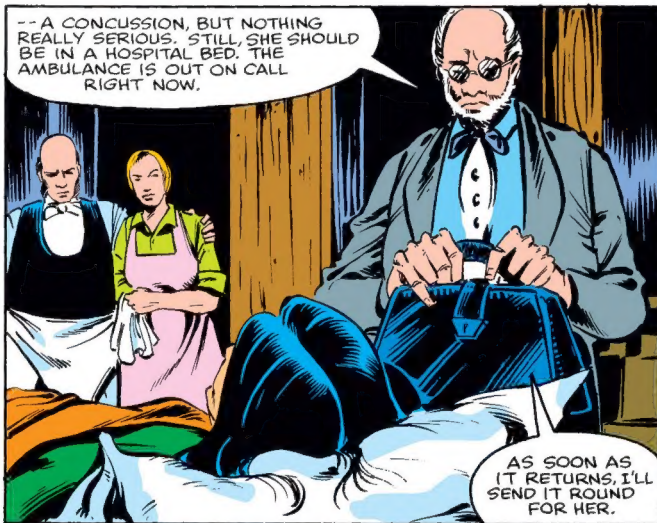


...THE KIND WHO KNOW HOW TO WRING COOPERATION FROM THE MOST STUBBORN FLESH AND BLOOD.



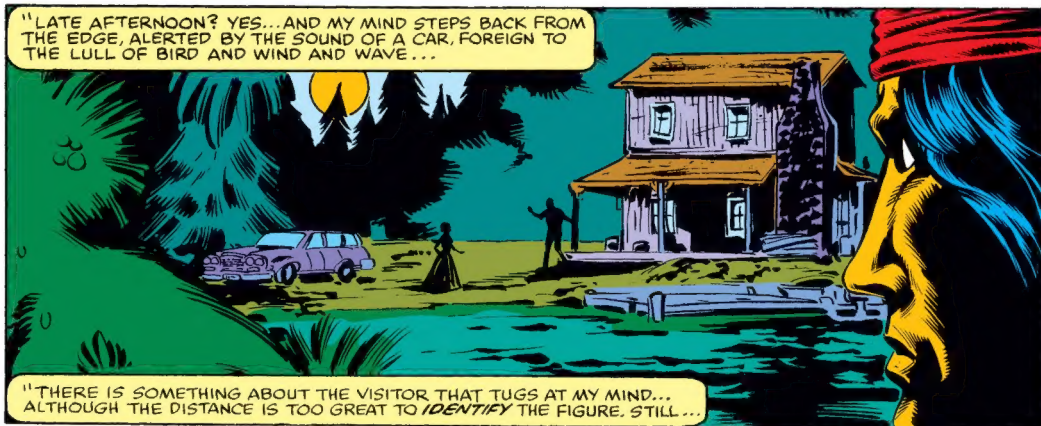
"I REST, ON THE EDGE OF ALERTNESS, NUMB, HAZY, LANGUID, BUT EVER AWARE..."

"...AND UNABLE TO ESCAPE THE THOUGHTS OF LEIKO'S WELFARE..."



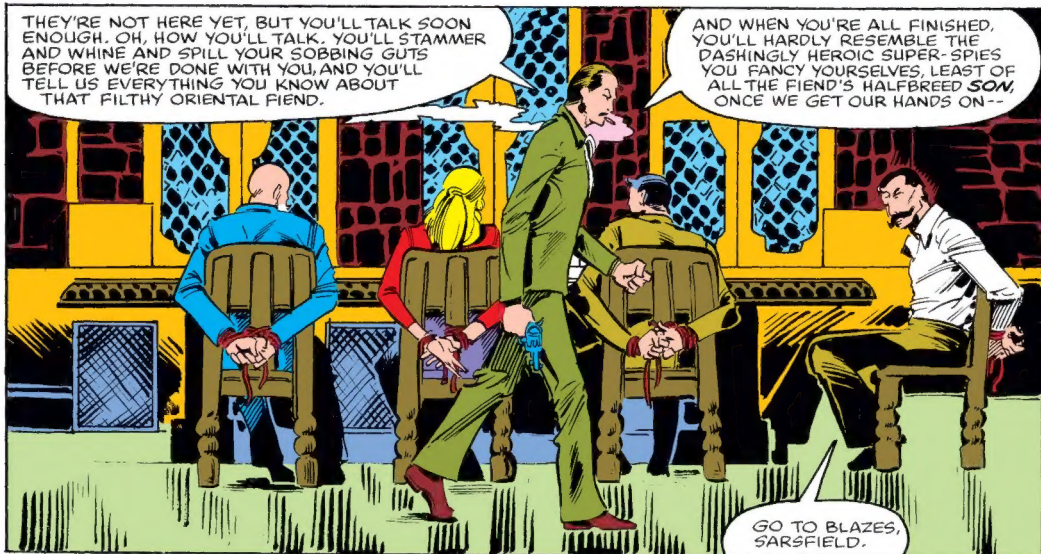
--A CONCUSSION, BUT NOTHING REALLY SERIOUS. STILL, SHE SHOULD BE IN A HOSPITAL BED. THE AMBULANCE IS OUT ON CALL RIGHT NOW.

AS SOON AS IT RETURNS, I'LL SEND IT ROUND FOR HER.



"LATE AFTERNOON? YES... AND MY MIND STEPS BACK FROM THE EDGE, ALERTED BY THE SOUND OF A CAR, FOREIGN TO THE LULL OF BIRD AND WIND AND WAVE..."

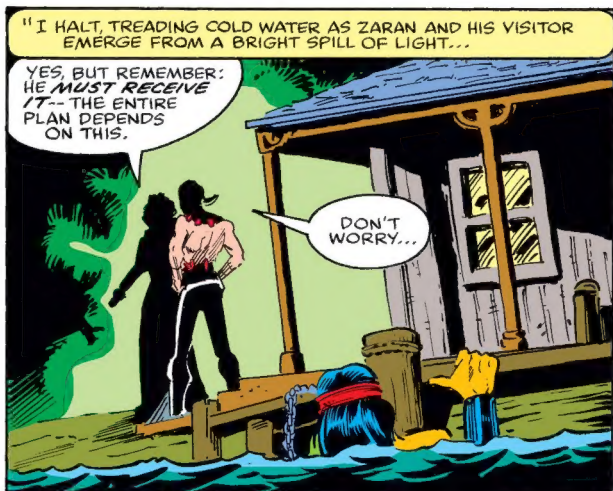
"THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT THE VISITOR THAT TUGS AT MY MIND... ALTHOUGH THE DISTANCE IS TOO GREAT TO IDENTIFY THE FIGURE. STILL..."





YOU'RE MIGHTY GOOD AT THAT, AIN'T'CHA, SARSFIELD? BET YA HIT THE BULLSEYE EVERY TIME--

-- WHEN YER TARGET'S HANDS ARE TIED.



"I HALT, TREADING COLD WATER AS ZARAN AND HIS VISITOR EMERGE FROM A BRIGHT SPILL OF LIGHT..."

YES, BUT REMEMBER: HE **MUST RECEIVE IT**-- THE ENTIRE PLAN DEPENDS ON THIS.

DON'T WORRY...



...HE'LL GET IT.

"AGAIN I AM TEASED BY THE HINT OF RECOGNITION... SOMETHING FAMILIAR IN THE VISITOR'S POSTURE AND LOW VOICE..."



"... BUT DARKNESS HAS OBSCURED MY VISION, AND SOUND HAS BEEN DISTORTED BY THE LAPPING WATER.

"I MUST ASSUME THEY SPOKE OF THE TAPE, BUT **WHO** MUST RECEIVE IT? WHAT **PLAN**?"

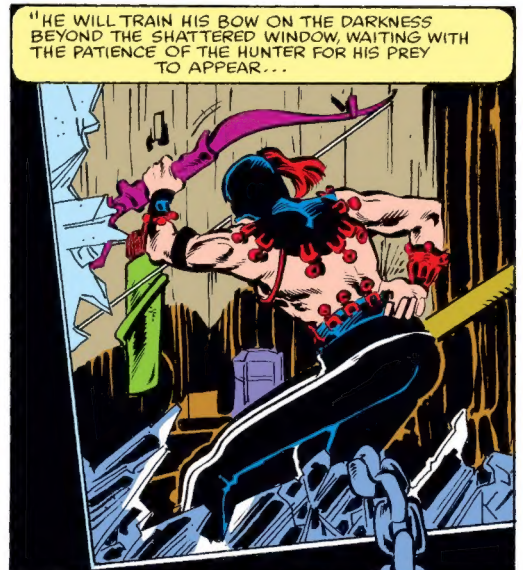
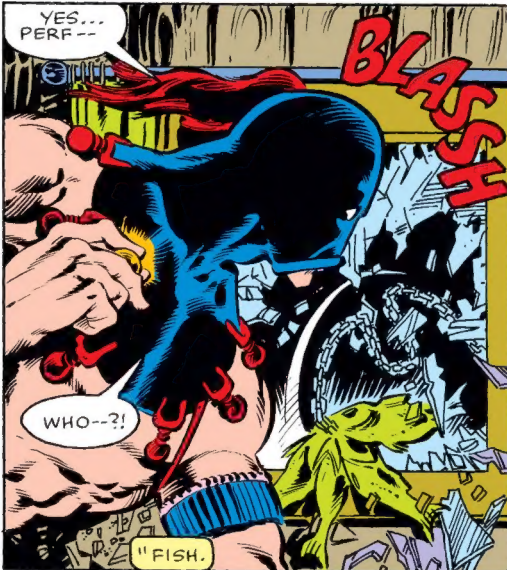


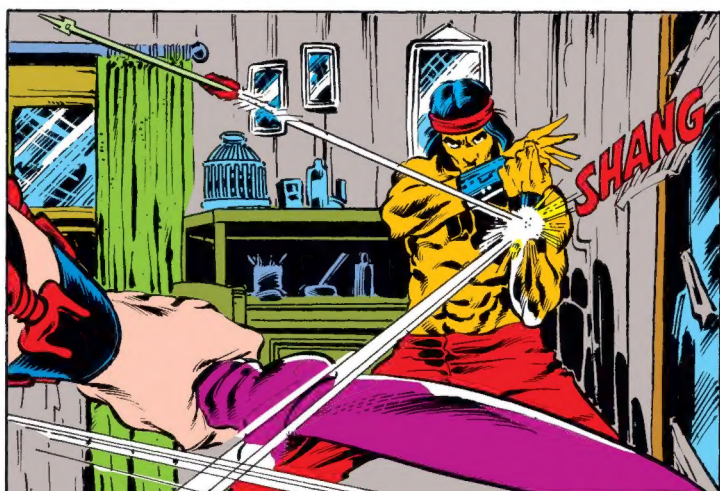
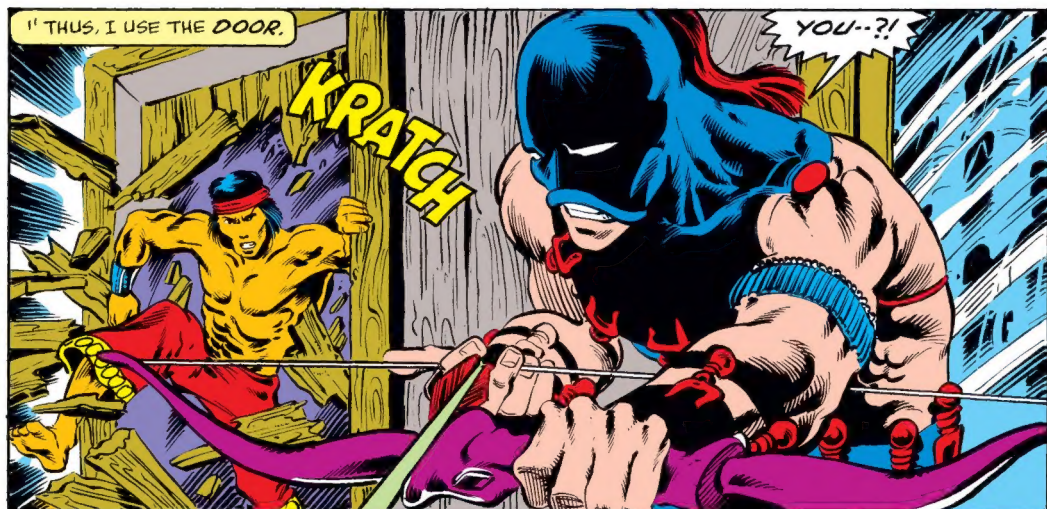
"THE LODGE DOOR CLOSES, CUTTING THE SPILL OF LIGHT, AND THE CAR'S MOTOR FADES TO THE SOUND OF WIND AND WAVE. I EMERGE... BUT... WHAT IS THIS?"

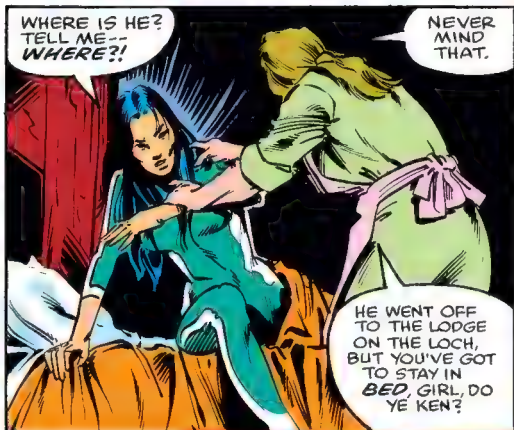
"A CHAIN...?"

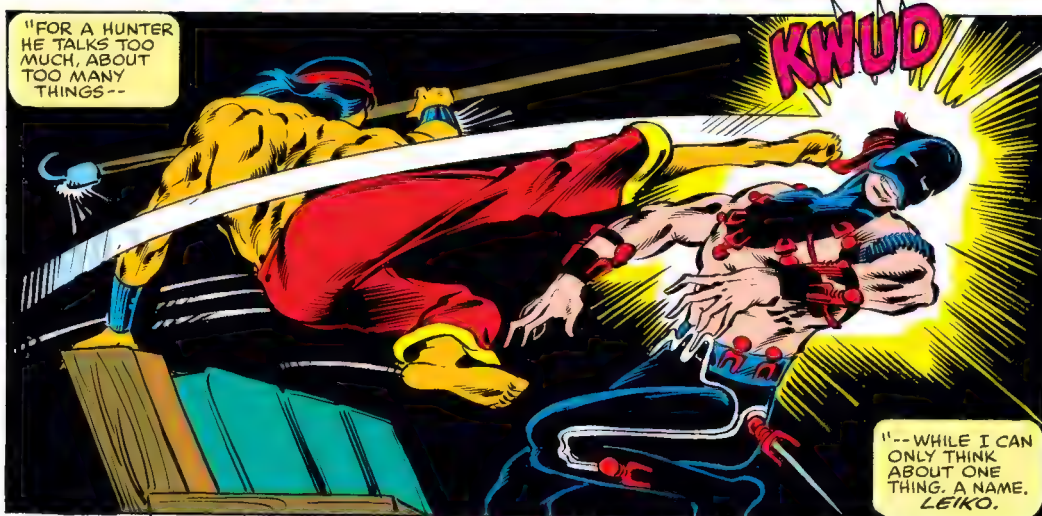


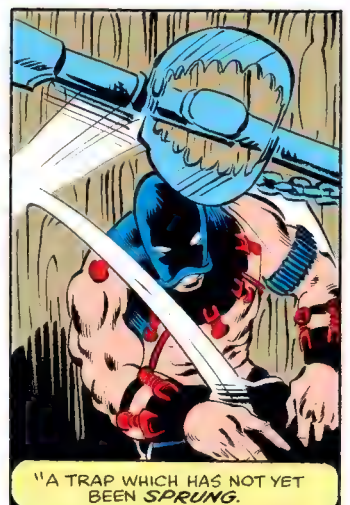
"FISH."



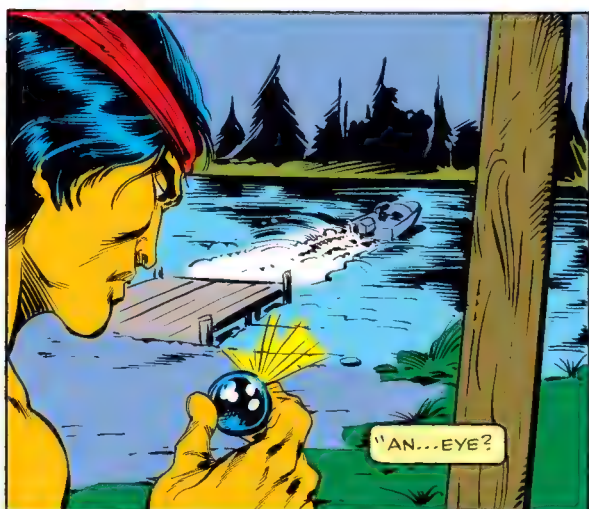
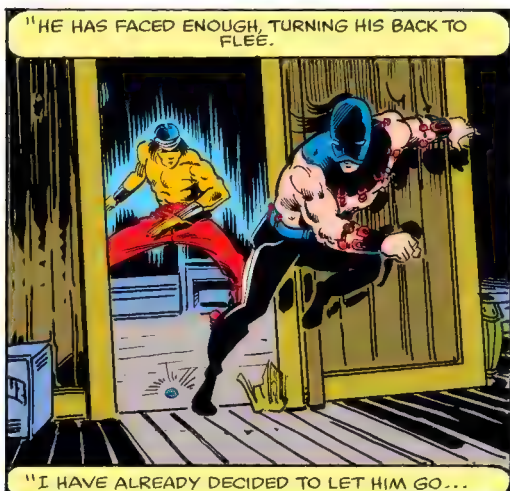
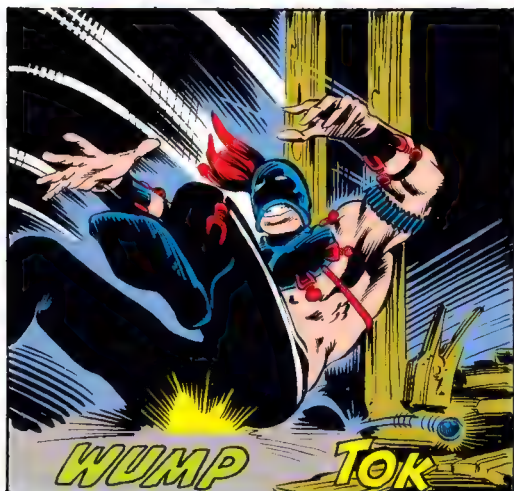


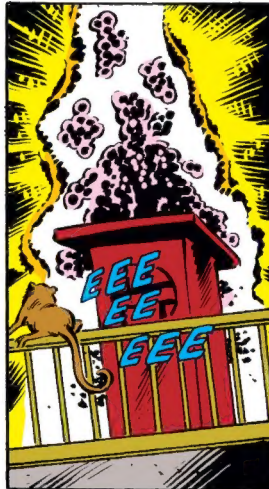
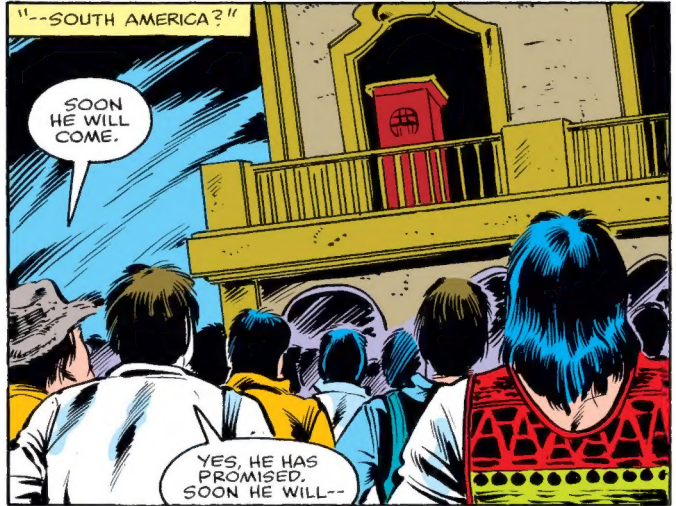


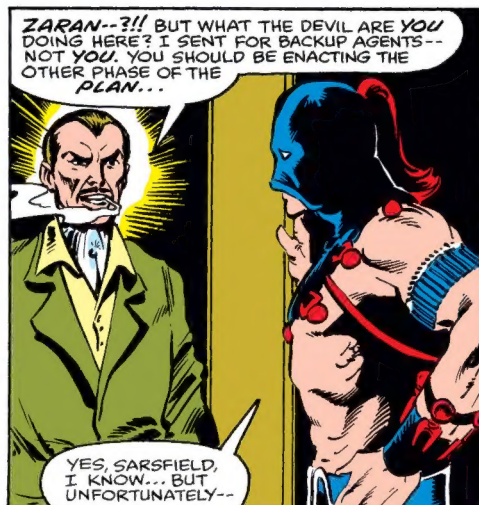
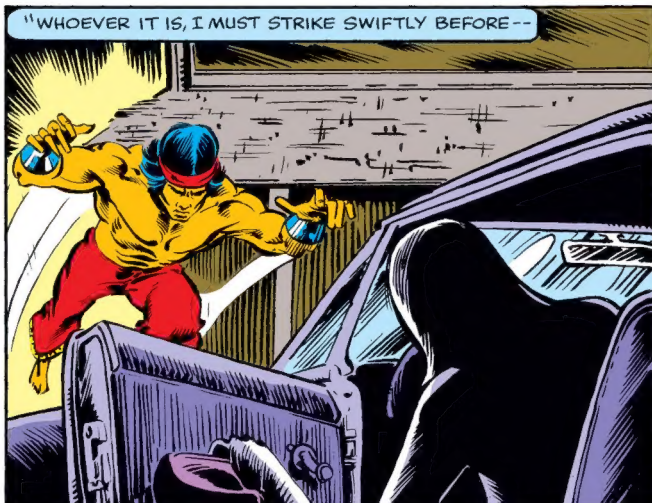


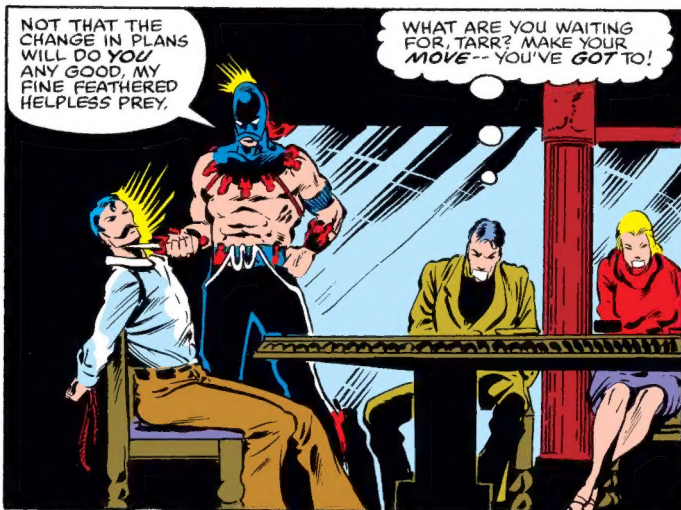
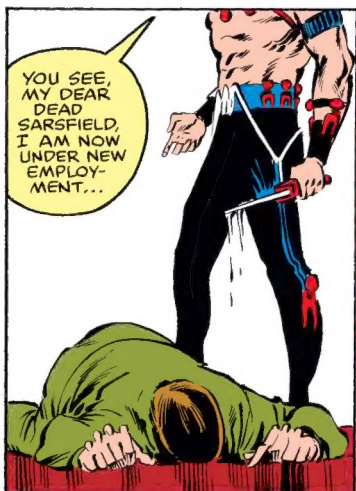
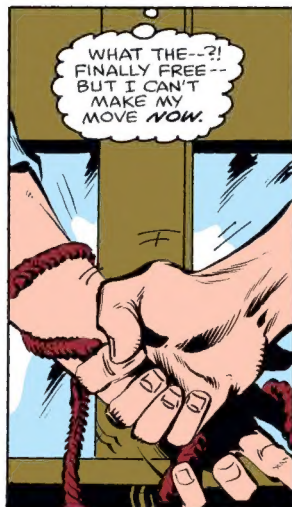












MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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New York, New York 10022

ROGER STERN
EDITOR
JIM SALICRUP
ASSISTANT EDITOR

First, some late results on our rather special "Nights" issue, then the final results of our Shen Kuei Mini-Contest. . .

Dear Sirs,

After reading the first six pages of MOKF #71, I was forced to DOUBLE back and check the name of the author. Surely Doug Moench wouldn't stoop to a common re-cap. I was wrong. However, reading further, my initial shock was wholly unjustified. The jigsaw puzzle mesh of Shang-Chi's prior wanderings was anything but common and served as a perfect introduction for the story that followed.

Never in the history of comics has a character become so human. There's nothing else to be said.

Daryl Hooke
159 Woodstock
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Dear Doug, Mike, and Bruce,

I've been meaning to write this letter ever since MOKF #71 came out, but every time I try to start I end up rereading the whole issue and never getting over to the typewriter. In short, I consider #71 to be the best issue of MASTER OF KUNG FU I have ever seen.

First off, while I had read every part of the "Red Seas" saga, pages 2 through 6 summed it up very nicely, folding it into a compact data base on which greater understanding of the characters can be built. It's surprising how much a summary helps in understanding a story, even if you've seen the whole thing.

The rest of the issue was a delightful breather between action stories, making us far more comfortable with the main characters, strengthening them and ensuring that future action sequences will be all the more effective. I hope this kind of issue sells as well as it should because I'd like to see more of these throughout Marvel's entire line. Peter Parker particularly needs a sit-back-and-meet-the-fellow issue; he has not been communicating himself to his readership very well recently.

Add to an already masterfully crafted issue's some final touches, like the cat, "Close Encounters," the pizza, and Shang and Leiko's seeming obsession with Fleetwood Mac—and you have a true masterpiece! The whole experience was so unexpected, so . . . friendly, that I just can't bring myself to put it away. The art by Zeck and Patterson was fine, too. I'm glad to see Mike on MOKF; any chance of having Terry Austin ink an issue? He'd look great over Zeck.

Kurt Busiek
Rm 912, Box 88, Lawrinson, 303 Stadium Place
Syracuse, NY 13210

While Terry Austin has been inking the occasional cover, Kurt, you've probably noticed by now that our new permanent inker is the slickly grabbing Gene Day. And believe us, you're gonna like his stuff!

Now, before Doug is tempted to dwell any longer on #71



(asking embarrassing questions like: "Howcum nobody noticed that the jigsaw puzzle motif began with the title, using the neologism "NighTimes" to form a congruent joining of two separate words?"), let's move onward—to the true meaning of Shen Kuei. . .

Greetings and salutations,

Well, people, here I am again. The significance of Shen Kuei's name derives from ancient Chinese mythology. The first clue is found in MOKF #38 (page 27, panel 1) when gang leader Chandar said to Cat: "...you are worthy of the legends dwelling in your name. . ."

Shen in Chinese means mountain, and Kuei can mean either Demon or Ghost, which then forms "Demon (or Ghost) of the Mountain." (Note: The imagery on page 15 is excellent, in that Shen Kuei's stronghold is situated *above* Hong Kong.) The Chinese legends of "Shen Kuei" inform us that he could assume the form or powers of his totem, which was either a fox or a wolf, or even sometimes a *cat*! It's obvious when viewing Shen Kuei's battle scenes that he has indeed assumed a number of his cat totem's abilities: Stealth, agility, swiftness, and ferocity, to name a few. As for the comparison/contrast between Cat and Chi: Both are active spirits seeking justice, but Chi is more esthetically minded while Cat is decidedly analytical in his thinking. Finally, they are presented as polar opposites, though not *pure* ones; this can be seen in the beautiful symbolism presented on pages 30 & 31 of MOKF #39. As we know, Shen Kuei is the embodiment of the yin (evil) and Chi is that of the yang (good). Also, Juliette is the yang within the yin, and the Siamese cat is the yin within the yang. By looking at the forms of Juliette and the Siamese cat, we may conclude that Shen Kuei has a great deal of yang within his yin (almost half and half, since Juliette is only slightly smaller than Shen Kuei), while Chi has a small but noticeable amount of yin within his yang (the stewardess noticed the Siamese cat bulging from his jacket at the end of #39). Thanks, group, for some truly enjoyable reading!

Brian M. Kane
RD #2 Box 40
Jeannette, PA 15644

Dear Doug & Mike,

Remembering that the "rising and advancing of a spirit" nature of Shang-Chi's name comes from the *I Ching*, I turned to the Book of Changes for help with this Shen Kuei Mini-Contest. The Wilhelm/Baynes translation defines "Shen" as the light spirit (or yang). Taken together, Shen & Kuei encompass all possibilities, even as yin & yang unites all opposites to form a unity. Thus, it appears that Shang-Chi has an identical, but opposite, character to Shen Kuei. Something like an eternal conflict of equally balanced opposites seems to be implied.

Doug, you could have invented any pair of Chinese-sounding words to give Cat a real name. Instead, you did it the hard way, with cleverness and imagination, providing your readership with new & challenging Sinological concepts to ponder. "Wo ai ni" for it.

Mr. & Mrs. J. Zweig
1230 Pennsylvania Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11239

It seems we have here another split-win, and dual prizes will be awarded for both of the above entries. Congrats, People! However, once again Doug is just a wee bit surprised that no one quite got to the heart of the matter. In this case, simplicity is the key. Yes, "Shen Kuei" is indeed another way of saying "yin/yang," but also: "Shen" means "good" and "Kuei" means "evil." Ergo, Shen Kuei is a good bad-guy, while Shang-Chi is a bad good-guy. ("Bad," at least, in the "Cat" and "Fight Without Pity" two-parter.)

So until nexttime, be good (with just a touch of bad for balance), People!